

HEALTHY START SAMPLER

Growing **happier, healthier** children
in early learning environments



Saplings ELC & Regina Lutheran Home: Being Active has no Age Limit

Saplings Early Learning Centre in Regina is part of the larger Eden Care Communities group which provides housing and healthcare to seniors, adults and children. Saplings has been involved in intergenerational activities with one of the affiliated centres, Regina Lutheran Home, for a little over a year. At least once a week, the staff and children of Saplings take the 10 minute walk together over to the Regina Lutheran Home to do activities with the residents including singing songs or doing arts and crafts. It wasn't until the Saplings staff took Healthy Start training in November that they wondered if the intergenerational activities could be enhanced by having the seniors and children be active together. After working closely with the Lutheran Home Recreation Therapist, they realized that both the seniors and children do a lot of similar activities, especially active songs that help to stretch the fingers out and

improve dexterity. The recreation team also used pool noodles as a way to increase the seniors' upper body mobility. "These were things that we were doing too, but we were never in communication before," says Ashley Elgert, Director of Saplings Early Learning Centre.

The Saplings staff started to bring some of the Active Play Kit equipment they received from Healthy Start to the Regina Lutheran Home. "The parachute is a big hit with both the children and the seniors," says Elgert. "The Lutheran Home staff joke with us saying that they know when we're here because they can hear us throughout the whole building!"

Being active together has been beneficial for both the children and seniors in numerous ways. "The balloons were a great ice breaker," recounts Ryan Bahan, Manager of



Intergenerational Care at Eden Care Communities. "At first the children were very shy and at times scared of the wheelchairs. Once they began playing together they warmed right up." Now, upon arriving at the home the children don't hesitate saying 'hi' to the residents, giving them hugs and helping to hand out play equipment.

For the entire text, visit <https://healthystartkids.ca/saplings-elc-and-regina-lutheran-home-prove-that-being-active-has-no-age-limit/>

Healthy Start Symposium

On January 18th, the Healthy Start / Départ Santé team held a forum to celebrate their achievements in Phase 2 and to share the plan for the future of the project. The day was packed full



with 15 amazing presenters each sharing about how they were uniquely involved with Healthy Start. In the morning, we heard a panel of presenters discuss how Healthy Start has impacted 'Me, My Centre, and My Community' and also a presentation on the impact of Healthy Start on the health and wellness of young children. After lunch, the Healthy Start team wanted to energize the crowd, so they led everyone in the ABC for Fitness Chant – it was so much fun! After that, several presenters shared their views on the importance of investing in the early years. Finally, the plan for the future of

HSDS was launched! Cultural adaptation, parent engagement and online training will be the priorities. The Phase 3 Participants made many valuable suggestions to help the project succeed. All in all, it was a great day and the HSDS team would like to thank everyone who joined us in-person and online!

Click here to see the Symposium presentations and to view the live recording: <https://healthystartkids.ca/healthy-start-symposium-2017/>

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A new phase of parent participation

We know parent engagement, parent involvement, parent contribution – are all important concepts in early years health promotion. Healthy Start made no exception in developing its evidenced based programming by including a parent awareness component.

But how do we best engage parents – who we know are so busy? How do we as health promoters, ensure there is a seamless transition of healthy behaviours from the centre to the home and vice versa? How can we encourage more healthy choices at home and in the centre!?

Phase 3 of Healthy Start will tackle this important issue over the next three years. The initiative will have a chance to build upon its program and pilot some new ideas to engage parents in more physical activity and healthy eating with their young children. So where do we start? We will learn and adapt a few of the following programs:

- *Healthy Together* (Kelowna initiative)
- MEND SK
- Collaborations with various early years and community stakeholders, Family Resource Centres in SK and NB in both French and in English.

For more on this subject, visit

https://healthystartkids.ca/?hs_home=a-new-phase-of-parent-participation/#more-3204

To help develop movement skills like body and spatial awareness, jumping and leaping, use this poem with the activity "River bank jump" (LEAP HOP p. 78-79).



Three Little Monkeys by Anonymous

Three little monkeys swinging from a tree,
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be
Then....**SNAP!**

Two little monkeys swinging from a tree,
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be
Then....**SNAP!**

One little monkey swinging from a tree,
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be
Then....**SNAP!**

Parent resource: <http://www.decoda.ca/resources/rsc-child-family/leap-resources/hop/hop-river-bank-jump/>

LET'S MAKE:

Baked bannock with berries



INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups of flour (use at least half whole wheat flour)
- 3 tbsp. of sugar
- 2 tbsp. of baking powder
- 1 tsp. of salt
- 1 cup of berries
- 1 cup of water
- ¼ cup of oil or melted margarine

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F (180°C)
2. In a large bowl, mix dry ingredients with a fork and stir in berries.
3. Stir together the oil and water and add to the bowl with dry ingredients.
4. Work mixture together with hands to form a ball. Knead about 10 times.
5. With floured hands, pat into a circle on a greased cookie sheet.
6. Bake for 30 minutes

Serves 16 children

Source: LEAP Food Flair, Legacies Now, p.148

The information contained in this newsletter is intended to inform early childhood practitioners and parents. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

CONNECT WITH US!

www.healthystartkids.ca



Saskatchewan Team:

306-653-7454

1-855-653-7454

info@healthystartkids.ca

New Brunswick Team:

506-863-2273

Healthy Start is made possible through support of the Saskatchewan Network for Health Services in French and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

